

REMARKS

The amendments and remarks presented herein are believed to be fully responsive to the recent Office Action. Reconsideration is requested.

Disposition of Claims.

Claims 1-22 were pending in the application. By this response, claims 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 18 and 22 are cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 11-17 and 19-21 remain pending in the application.

Drawings.

The drawings were objected to because they did not include the following reference signs mentioned in the description: 15, 55, 56, 57 and 58. Enclosed herein are corrected drawing sheets adding these reference signs along with additional ones discovered missing by Applicants. The replacement sheets are labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. Also, enclosed are annotated drawing sheets showing handwritten changes. No new matter is added. Acceptance of the replacement sheets and withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Allowable Subject Matter.

Claims 3-6, 9-12, 18, 19 and 22 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 5. The word "reduction" was amended to be "changing". This terminology is more consistent with the original German language patent application and resulted from an error in the translation. Also, this provides consistency with the added limitations of dependent claims 4 and 6. Claim 11 is rewritten in independent form. Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 12-17 and 19-21 are dependent claims that are dependent upon one of the rewritten claims. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 11-17 and 19-21 should be in a condition for allowance.

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Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claims 7-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The claims have been amended in a manner which overcomes the informalities observed in the Office Action. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 13-17, 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 199 27 847 C1. The rejection is traversed. However, in order to expedite prosecution, claim 1 was rewritten in the manner previously set forth in the section entitled "Allowable Subject Matter" and, accordingly, should be in a condition for allowance. Claim 7 is cancelled. Claims 13-17 are dependent upon claim 1 as a base claim. Claim 20 is amended to be dependent upon claim 11 and claim 21 is dependent upon claim 8. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection has been overcome.

Withdrawal is requested.

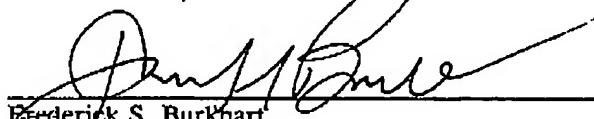
Issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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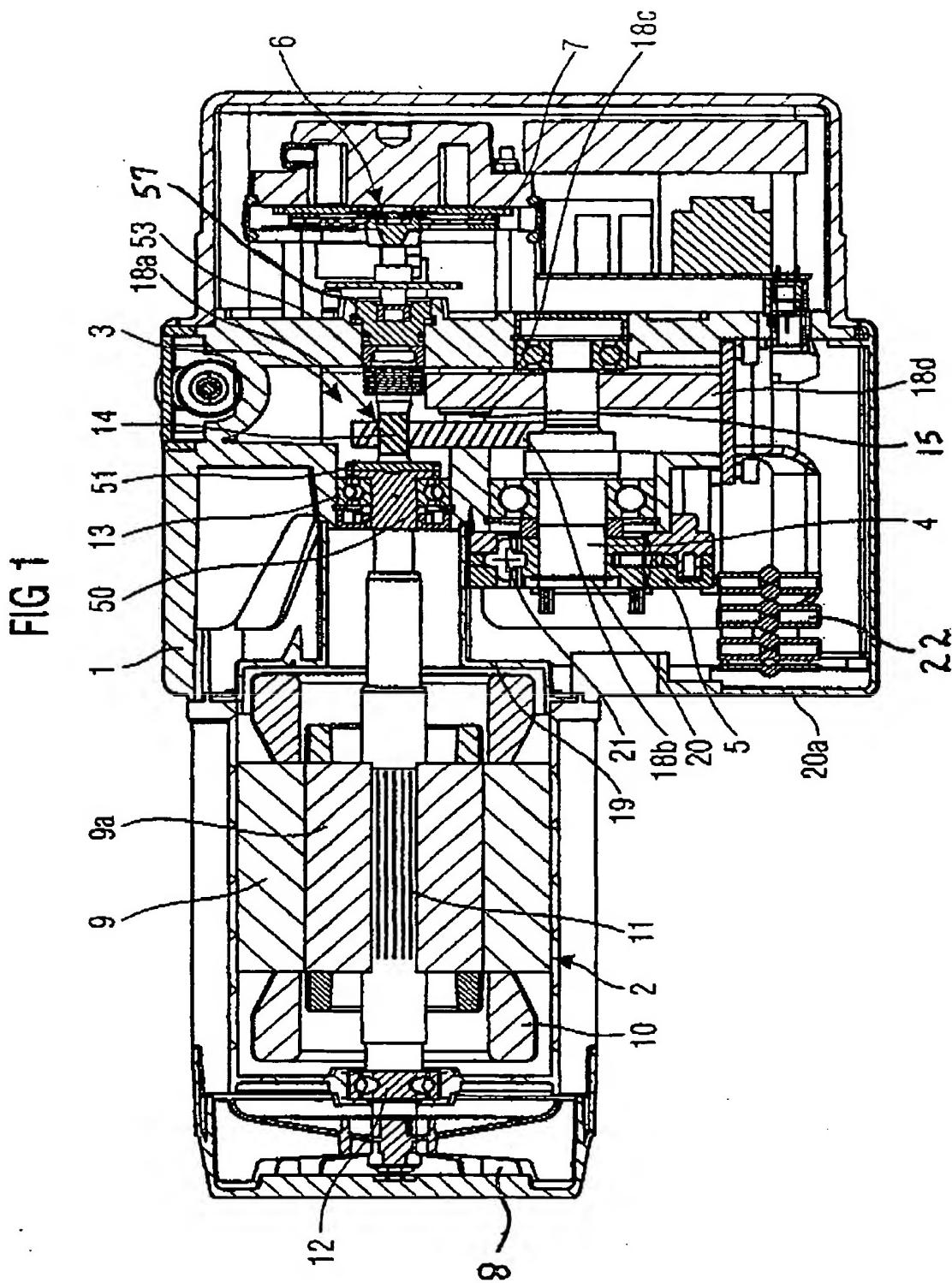
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FIG 2

